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2020-21 Summer Assignment  
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Hello Future AP Lit Student!

Well, this year certainly has been a difficult one! I hope that you and your family have been able to stay healthy and safe, and that the summer brings you some rest, relaxation, and rejuvenation.

Because it's likely that the last few months have presented a pretty significant disruption in your learning, I want to make it really clear to you that, as your English teacher next year, your needs and well-being are front and center in my mind! I'll be spending this summer looking for ways to make the AP Lit curriculum engaging and community-based. I want to modernize some of the material we read for the course to make it more meaningful for you--a little more connected to the world we are in now. I want us to spend next year reading interesting literature, figuring out what those works are telling us about being alive, and sharing our thoughts and understandings with one another.

That journey should start for you this summer with some active reading and thinking! It is my hope that you will do some reading this summer, expand upon your understanding of literature, and come back to school in the fall reading to discuss and debate important ideas and issues in our world.

### **AP Literature Summer Assignment 2020-21**

**1. Read A Book:** From the list below, choose a book you will read this summer. You are responsible for getting your own copy of the book to read. You may read the book in hard copy or online in a digital format. Each of the books below is a recent publication, all are regarded very highly, and all are books that AP Literature teachers across the nation are assigning this summer. I've included a digital link to a Goodreads review for each, so you can get a sense of each book before you make up your mind. Given the political context of our world, I have intentionally decided that our summer reading should focus on listening to contemporary black voices who explicitly tackle racism as a subject. Once you have decided on a book, and how you will read it (hard copy or digital), please email me back, and let me know your choice! If purchasing a book is difficult for your family, please let me know, and I will help you get a copy. Email me at [jthurston@srcs.org](mailto:jthurston@srcs.org).

[Whitehead, Colson: The Nickel Boys](#)  
[Ta-Nehisi Coates: The Water Dancer](#)  
[Edward P Jones: The Known World](#)

[Whitehead, Colson: The Underground Railroad](#)  
[Smith, Zadie: White Teeth](#)

There is no essay to write, and no journal or annotation activity. That's it, just pick a book, get it, and read it in whatever way makes the most sense for you, and in whatever way you are most likely to retain knowledge of the book. If you choose to do some kind of log, journal, or annotation, I will give you extra credit for that.

You will write an essay for me during the first week of class, and I will ask you to write about whichever book you read this summer. I will evaluate your essay based on your ability to speak knowledgeably about the text. I am making the assumption that you are taking this class because you are motivated, you enjoy being in an environment with other students who are engaged in their education, and you are trying to be better prepared for college. People who want those things read because they want to do well. I assume you want that.

**2. Sign Up for my AP Summer Canvas Course:** I do want to try to spend a little time getting to know you, and finding out what you like, what you are interested in, and what has worked or not worked for you at school in the past. I believe it is my job to “make” a course that will suit your interests and tastes. It should excite you, allow you to be creative--AND prepare you for success in college! You will get an invitation to that course in an email. Accept that invitation as soon as you see it. Open the course. Look for a “to do list” on a bulletin board. Click on the to do list and follow the instructions. There are several links on the bulletin board. Follow all of them.

**3. Sign up for the AP Lit 20-21 Remind:** While I think there are a lot of cool things we can do online in Canvas and in other programs, it's easier to stay connected through Remind. I need you to do that too! You will find the directions for the Remind on the “to do list” in the Canvas course.

**4. Periodically, reply or respond to a short writing prompt in Canvas.** There will be 3 of these over the summer. And I'm thinking about a paragraph or two. Just letting me know how you are and what you are doing. What your summer is like, and what you're up to. I will send you a Remind when I post these.

**5. IF** you would like help writing--or beginning to work on--your **college application essay**, I am also willing to provide you with that support this summer as well. On Canvas, you will see another link that says “College Essay”. Click on that and it will open a form. It's helpful if you fill out the form whether you want help or not.

And that's it. Basically, I'm asking you to read a book, and get in touch/stay in touch with me over the summer. Because the school still hasn't created a schedule for next year it is possible, although VERY UNLIKELY, that you will be faced with a scheduling conflict. For this reason, none of the English teachers with summer assignments are asking students to do any work that won't have value, regardless of whether or not you are in the class. Reading a book over the summer is a school-wide, district-wide supported expectation for all students!

I can't wait to meet you all, and hope you have a wonderful summer! Stay safe, stay home (as much as you can), get outside, do something creative, and wash your hands a lot!

Ms. Thurston